

## Sūrah Ṣād

Sūrah Ṣād was revealed in Makkah and it has 88 verses and 5 sections

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

### Verses 1 - 16

ص وَالْقُرْآنِ ذِي الذِّكْرِ ﴿١﴾ بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي عِزَّةٍ وَ شِقَاقٍ  
 ﴿٢﴾ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ فَنَادَوْا وَلَاتٍ حِينَ مَنَاصٍ ﴿٣﴾  
 وَعَجِبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالَ الْكُفَرُونَ هَذَا سِحْرٌ كَذَّابٌ  
 ﴿٤﴾ أَجْعَلِ الْإِلَهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجَابٌ ﴿٥﴾ وَأَنْطَلَقَ  
 الْمَلَأُ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ امْشُوا وَاصْبِرُوا عَلَى آلِهَتِكُمْ إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ يُرَادُ  
 ﴿٦﴾ مَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَذَا فِي الْمِلَّةِ الْآخِرَةِ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا اخْتِلَاقٌ ﴿٧﴾  
 ء أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِنْ ذِكْرِي بَلْ لَمَّا  
 يَدُوقُوا عَذَابَ ﴿٨﴾ أَمْ عَنْدهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّكَ الْعَزِيزِ الْوَهَّابِ  
 ﴿٩﴾ أَمْ لَهُمْ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَلْيَرْتَقُوا فِي  
 الْأَسْبَابِ ﴿١٠﴾ جُنْدًا مَا هُنَالِكَ مَهْزُومٌ مِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ ﴿١١﴾ كَذَبَتْ  
 قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَعَادٌ وَفِرْعَوْنُ ذُو الْأَوْتَادِ ﴿١٢﴾ وَتَمُودُ وَقَوْمُ لُوطٍ  
 وَ أَصْحَابُ لَيْكَةِ ۖ أُولَئِكَ الْأَحْزَابُ ﴿١٣﴾ إِنْ كُلُّ إِلَّا كَذَبِ  
 الرُّسُلِ فَحَقَّ عِقَابِ ﴿١٤﴾ وَمَا يَنْظُرُ هَؤُلَاءِ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً مَأْهَا  
 مِنْ فَوَاقٍ ﴿١٥﴾ وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا عَجِّلْ لَنَا قِطْنًا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ ﴿١٦﴾

Ṣād. By the Qur'ān, (the book) of advice, (this is true,) [1] but those who disbelieve are (involved) in false pride and opposition. [2] How many a generation We have destroyed before them, so they cried out (for mercy), while no time was left for having refuge. [3] And they wonder that a warner has come to them from among themselves. And the disbelievers say, " This is a magician, a sheer liar. [4] Has he (not) turned all the gods into a single God? Certainly, it is a very strange thing." [5] And the leaders among them went forth saying (to their followers)," Walk away (from the Prophet) and stay firm on (adhering to) your gods. This (call of the Prophet) is surely something designed (for his personal benefit). [6] We never heard of it in the former faith (of ours). This is nothing but a false invention. [7] Is it (believable) that the message of advice has been sent down to him (alone) from among all of us?"— The fact is that they are in doubt about My message; rather, they have not yet tasted My punishment. [8] Do they have the treasures of the mercy of your Lord, the Mighty, the Bountiful? [9] Or do they have the ownership of the heavens and the earth and what lies between them? Then let them ascend (to the sky) by ropes. [10] What is there (in Makkah) is just a host of the (opposing) groups that has to be defeated. [11] Even before them, the people of Nūḥ and 'Ad and Fir'aun (Pharaoh), the man of stakes, [12] and Thamud and the people of Lūṭ and the people of Aykah have rejected (the messengers). They were the (strong) groups. [13] All of them did nothing but declare the messengers as liars; hence, My punishment became due. [14] And these people are waiting for nothing but for a single Cry (the sound of the Trumpet to be blown on the Doomsday) that will have no pause. [15] And they say, " O our Lord, give us our share (of the punishment) sooner, before the Day of Reckoning." [16]

## Commentary

### The background of the revelation

The background of the revelation of the initial verses of this Sūrah was that Abū Ṭālib, the uncle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was doing his best as his guardian, despite that he had not yet embraced Islam. When he fell sick, the chiefs of the tribe of Quraish held a consultative meeting in which Abū Jahl, 'Aṣ Ibn Wā'il, Aswad Ibn Muṭṭalib, Aswad Ibn 'Abd Yaghuth and several other chiefs participated. They discussed the

situation they faced. Abū Ṭālib was sick. If he were to pass away and they were to take some strong action against the Holy Prophet ﷺ to restrain his activities in favor of promoting his new faith, the people of Arabia will throw taunts at them and say, 'Here are these people who could do nothing against him while his uncle Abū Ṭālib was alive while, now when he has died, they have stood up against him as their target. So, they came to the conclusion that they should decide this thing about Muḥammad ﷺ while Abū Ṭālib was still alive, so that he would stop speaking ill about their objects of worship.

Accordingly, these people came to Abū Ṭālib and said to him that his nephew spoke ill of their objects of worship. They appealed to his sense of justice, and asked him to tell his nephew that he was free to worship any god he liked, but say nothing against their objects of worship. The truth of the matter was that the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself did not say about these idols anything more than that they were insensate and lifeless. They were not their creators, nor their sustainers, and that nothing that could benefit or harm them was in their control. Abū Ṭālib asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ to come in the meeting. To him, he said, 'My dear nephew, these people are complaining about you that you speak ill of their objects of worship. Leave them on their faith and, on your part, you keep worshiping your God.' People from the Quraish also kept making their comments following it.

Finally, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, 'My dear uncle, should I not be inviting them to something that is better for them?' Abū Ṭālib said, 'What thing is that?' He said, 'I want them to say a particular *kalimah* (statement) by virtue of which the whole Arabia will be at their feet, and they will become masters of the non-Arab lands beyond it.' Thereupon, Abū Jahl said, 'Tell us. What that kalimah is? By your father, not simply one kalimah, we are ready to say ten of them.' To this he replied, 'Just say: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ (*lā ilaha il-lal-lah*: There is no god (worthy of worship) but Allah). Hearing this, all of them rose to leave saying, 'Are we supposed to leave all objects of worship we have, and take to just one? This is something very strange.' It was on this occasion that these verses of Sūrah Ṣād were revealed. (Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, pp. 27, 28 v. 4)

In verse 6, it was said: ... وَأَنطَلَقُ الْمَلَأُ مِنْهُمْ (And the leaders among them went forth saying (to their followers), "Walk away (from the Prophet) and

stay firm on (adhering to) your gods - 12). This is pointing out to the event mentioned above that, once they heard the call to pure monotheism (*tauḥid*), they left the meeting.

وَفِرْعَوْنُ ذُو الْأَوْتَادِ (and Fir'aun, the man of the stakes - 12). The literal meaning of this expression appearing in verse 12 is 'Pharaoh of the stakes or pegs'. The commentators have explained this phrase in different ways. Some of them have said that this phrase refers to the stability of his dominion, and the sense is that the stakes or pegs of his kingdom were well-rooted in his country. Maulānā Thānavi has translated the phrase according to this explanation. Some others have said that he used to punish people by making them lie flat on the ground and driving stakes or pegs through their hands and feet, and on top of that, he would have snakes and scorpions released over the victim's body. Still others have said that he used to play some kind of a game with ropes and pegs and then, there are those who say that 'al-autad' or pegs means buildings for he had set up very strong structures (Tafsīr Qurṭubī). Pure is Allah who knows best.

أُولَئِكَ الْأَحْزَابُ (They were the [strong] groups. - 38:13) One explanation of this statement is that it is the description of the word 'groups' in verse 11. In other words, 'these are the groups or Confederates that have been pointed out in this verse.' Maulānā Thānavi has gone by this Tafsīr in his explanation of the verse. But, other commentators explain it in the sense that actually they were the groups that were really strong, not these people of Makkah. In other words, those who possessed real strength and power were the people of Nūḥ and 'Ad and Thamud and others like them. Compared with them, the *Mushriks* of Makkah were nothing. When such powerful people could not escape Divine punishment, they would hardly count. (Qurṭubī)

The word: فَوَاقٍ (*fawāq*) in verse 15: مَا لَهَا مِنْ فَوَاقٍ (that will have no pause.) is used in Arabic to convey several meanings. To begin with, '*fawāq*' is the period of time that intervenes between milking an animal and creation of milk in its teats once again. Then, it also means 'comfort.' Whatever the case, the sense is that the Horn (Ṣūr) blown by Sayyidnā Isrāfīl عليه السلام would be so continuous that there will be no pause in it. (Qurṭubī)

عَجِّلْ لَنَا قِطْنَا (O our Lord, give us our share [of the punishment] sooner, - 38:16 ). The word: قِطٌ (*qitt*) used here is, in reality, the document through which someone has been promised with a reward. Later, this word came to be used also as a 'share' in an absolute sense. Here, this very sense is meant, that is, 'let us have whatever share is coming to us from the reward and punishment of the Hereafter right here in this world.'

### Verses 17 - 20

إَصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُدَ ذَا الْأَيْدِ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿١٧﴾  
 سَخَّرْنَا الْجِبَالَ مَعَهُ يُسَبِّحْنَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِشْرَاقِ ﴿١٨﴾ وَالطَّيْرَ  
 مُحْشُورَةً كُلٌّ لَهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿١٩﴾ وَشَدَدْنَا مُلْكَهُ وَأَتَيْنَهُ الْحِكْمَةَ  
 وَفَضَّلْنَا الْخِطَابَ ﴿٢٠﴾

Bear patiently with what they say, and remember Our slave Dāwūd, the man of might. Surely he was ever-turning to Allah. [17] We had subjugated the mountains to join him (in) making *tasbiḥ* (i.e. pronouncing Allah's purity) at evening and sunrise, [18] and the birds as well, mustered together. All were turning to Allah with him. [19] And We made his kingdom strong, and gave him wisdom and decisive speech. [20]

### Commentary

It was said in verse 17: وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُدَ ذَا الْأَيْدِ (and remember Our servant, Dāwūd, the man of might). Nearly all commentators have explained it in the sense that he used to demonstrate great courage and strength during the course of his acts of worship (*ibādah*), therefore, soon after it, comes the sentence: إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ (Surely, he was ever-turning to Allah - 38:17). Accordingly, in a Ḥadīth of the Ṣaḥīḥayn (al-Bukhārī and Muslim), the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: "In sight of Allah, the most liked Ṣalāh is the Ṣalāh of Dāwūd عليه السلام and the most liked fasts are the fasts of Dāwūd عليه السلام. He would sleep half a night, worship a third of it, and then sleep during the sixth part, and would fast one day and remain without fast on the other; and when he confronted the enemy, he would never desert the battlefield; and, without any doubt, he turned to Allah sincerely and profusely." (Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr)

This method of *'ibādah* has been called most likeable for the initial reason that it is harder. A lifetime of fasting would make one used to it with the result that, after a passage of time, it does not remain that hard. But fasting by skipping a day in between is different. Here, the element of hardship continues. Then, there is another aspect of this method of fasting in that one who fasts in that manner becomes capable of combining his or her *'ibādah* with the necessary fulfillment of the rights of one's self, family and circle of acquaintances.

In verse 18, it was said: *إِنَّا سَخَّرْنَا الْجِبَالَ مَعَهُ*... (We had subjugated the mountains to join him in making *tasbiḥ* (i.e. pronouncing Allah's purity) at evening and sunrise). In this verse, mention has been made of mountains and birds joining Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام in the act of *tasbiḥ*. Detailed explanation of this phenomenon has already appeared in the commentary on Sūrah Al-Anbiyā' and Saba'. Here, it is worth noting that the *tasbiḥ* of mountains and birds has been mentioned at this place in a manner that it was a particular blessing for Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام. The question is: How did this become a blessing for Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام and what particular benefit accrued from the *tasbiḥ* of mountains and birds?

One answer to this is that it unravels a miracle at the hands of Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام - and it goes without saying that it is a great reward and blessing. In addition to that, Maulānā Thānavi has given a subtle explanation about it. He says that the *tasbiḥ* performed by mountains and birds had created in him a special taste for the remembrance of Allah, something that generates initiative, courage and verve in acts of worship (*'ibādah*). Collective *dhikr* has another benefit - that the Barakah that issues forth from it reflects on each other from the participants. There is a particular method of *dhikr* and spiritual engagement (*shughl*) recognized among the noble Ṣūfīs in which the participant imagines that the whole universe is making *dhikr*. This method has an unusual efficacy of its own in correcting and purifying one's inner state as well as in his enthusiasm for *'ibādah*. The basis of this method of *dhikr* is also deduced from this verse. (Masa'ilu-s- Sulūk, Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānavi)

### The Ṣalāh of ad-Duḥā (صَلَاةُ الضُّحَى)

At the end of verse 18, it was said: *بِالْعِشِيِّ وَالْإِشْرَاقِ* (at evening and sunrise).

The word: عَشِيٍّ ('*ashiyy*) used here means the time following *Zuhr* up to the next morning while إِشْرَاقٌ (*ishrāq*) means the time of the morning when sunshine has spread over the land. From this verse, Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās ؓ has argued that the Ṣalāh of *ad-duḥā* stands proved. This Ṣalāh is also called the Ṣalāh of al-Awwābīn. There are others who call it the Ṣalāh of al-Ishrāq - though, later on, the name of the Ṣalāh of al-Awwābīn became particularized with the six nafls made after Maghrib, while the Ṣalāh of al-Ishrāq became well known for the two or four nafls offered close after sunrise.

In the Ṣalāh of *ad-duḥā*, one could choose to offer any (even) number of *rak'āt* from two to twelve. Ḥadīth mentions many benefits it brings. According to a narration of Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah ؓ appearing in Jami' of Tirmidhī, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: "Anyone who were to become particular about two *rak'āt* of the Ṣalāh of *ad-duḥā*, has his sins forgiven - even if they be like the froth of the sea." In another narration from Sayyidnā Anas ؓ, he is reported to have said: "Anyone who were to make twelve *rak'āt* of the Ṣalāh of *ad-duḥā*, for him or her Allah Ta'ālā will make a palace of gold in Jannah." (Qurṭubī)

'Ulama' have said that any (even) number of *rak'āt* from two to twelve that can be performed conveniently is correct. But, having some particular routine in the case of its number is better, and if this routine reaches the minimum of four *rak'āt*, it is much better - because, the normal routine of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was to do four *rak'āt*.

The word: وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْحِكْمَةَ وَفَضْلَ (al-ḥikmah) appearing in verse 38:20: الْخِطَابِ (and gave him wisdom, and a decisive speech), as obvious, means wisdom, that is, 'We had blessed him with the precious assets of reason, insight and vision.' Some elders have suggested that it means 'nubuwwah', the station and mission of a prophet. As for the second gift: فَضْلَ الْخِطَابِ (*faṣl al-khiṭāb*: translated here as: a decisive speech), it has been explained in different ways by commentators. Some have said that it means power of oration - and the fact is that Sayyidnā Dāwūd ؓ was a great orator. He was the first one who started saying *amma ba'd*: (after that) following *ḥamd* and Ṣalāh in his religious sermons. Some others have said that it means the ability to make a decision at its best, that is, Allah Ta'ālā had given him the ability and power to resolve disputes and decide matters comprehensively. The truth of the matter is

that the words used in the Qur'an seem to have ample room for both meanings, and both are meant. Incidentally, the translation done by Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānavi - '*Faisla kar denay wali taqrir*' - helps accommodate both meanings. (And so does the English translation given above.)

### Verses 21 - 25

وَهَلْ أُنَبِّئُكَ نَبَأَ الْخَصْمِ إِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا الْمِحْرَابَ ﴿٢١﴾ إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَى  
 دَاوُدَ فَفَزَعَ مِنْهُمْ قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ ۚ خَصْمَنِ بَعِي بَعْضُنَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ  
 فَاحْكُم بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تُشْطِطْ وَاهْدِنَا إِلَى سَوَاءِ الصِّرَاطِ ﴿٢٢﴾  
 إِنَّ هَذَا أَخِي لَهُ تِسْعٌ وَتِسْعُونَ نَعْجَةً وَلِيَ نَعْجَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ فَقَالَ  
 أَكْفُلْنِيهَا وَعَزَّنِي فِي الْخِطَابِ ﴿٢٣﴾ قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ  
 نَعَجَتِكَ إِلَى زِجَارِهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْخُلَطَاءِ لِيَبْغِيَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى  
 بَعْضٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَقَلِيلٌ مَّا هُمْ ۖ وَظَنَّ دَاوُدُ  
 أَنَّمَا فَتَنَّاهُ فَاسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهُ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ﴿٢٤﴾ السَّجْدَةُ فَغَفَرْنَا لَهُ ذَلِكَ ۖ  
 وَإِنَّ لَهُ عِندَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ وَحُسْنَ مَّآبٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

And has there come to you the story of the litigants, when they entered the sanctuary by climbing over the wall? [21] When they entered upon Dāwūd, and he was scared of them, they said, " Be not scared. We are two litigants; one of us has wronged the other, so decide between us with truth, and do not cross the limits, and guide us to the right path. [22] This is my brother; he has ninety nine ewes, and I have a single ewe; still he said, 'Give it into my charge.' And he overpowered me in speech." [23] He (Dāwūd) said, "He has certainly wronged you by demanding your ewe to be added to his ewe. And many partners oppress one another, except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and very few they are." And Dāwūd realized that We had put him to a test, so he prayed to his Lord for forgiveness, and bowing down, he fell in prostration, and turned (to Allah). [24] So we forgave him that (lapse), and surely he



has a place of nearness in Our presence, and an excellent resort. [25]

### Commentary

In these verses, Allah Ta'ālā has mentioned an event relating to Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام. The way in which this event has been described in the noble Qur'ān, it tells only this much that Allah Ta'ālā had put him to some test by sending two disputing parties into his place of worship. Alerted thereby, Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام sought forgiveness from Allah Ta'ālā, and fell in prostration, and He forgave him. Since the real purpose of the noble Qur'ān at this place is to communicate that Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام used to turn to Allah Ta'ālā in every matter of concern he faced, and should he ever sense the least slip issuing forth from him, he would immediately seek forgiveness for it. Therefore, no details have been given as to what that test was, and what was that slip he committed against which he sought forgiveness, something that Allah Ta'ālā forgave him for.

Therefore, some investigative and cautious commentators have said in their explanation of these verses that Allah Ta'ālā has not given a detailed description of this slip and test relating to this great prophet of His due to some particular wise consideration. Hence, we too should not go about pursuing it, and whatever has been mentioned in the noble Qur'ān should be precisely what we should believe in. Even a great research-oriented commentator of the class of Ibn Kathīr has elected to follow this rule and has observed silence as far as details of this event are concerned. Then there is no doubt that this is the ideal course of caution, moderation and sound policy. Therefore, the learned from among the early forbears of Islam (*salaf*) used to say: اِهْمُوا مَا اِيْهَمَهُ اللّٰهُ (What Allah has left ambiguous, you too let it remain ambiguous). In this, there is wisdom, and expedient consideration. Then, it is obvious that it means the ambiguity of matters that do not relate to what we do and what we take as halal and haram and, as for matters that concern the collective deeds of Muslims, any ambiguity existing there has already been removed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ through his word and deed.

But, there are other commentators who have tried to determine the exact nature of this test and trial in the light of pre-Islam narratives. In this connection, there is that vulgar yarn that Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام

happened to have cast a look at the wife of Uriah, who was one of his military officers, that put the desire of marrying her in his heart and he, in order to get Uriah killed, entrusted with him a dangerous mission in which he was really killed and later on, he married his wife. It was to admonish him on this act of his that these two angels were sent in human form and shape.

But, this narrative is doubtlessly from among the absurdities that had found currency among Muslims under the influence of Jews. This narrative has been taken from the Bible, the Book of Samuel II, chap. 11. The only difference is that, in the cited reference, an open charge has been leveled against Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام that he had (refuge with Allah) committed adultery with the wife of Uriah prior to marriage. As for these narratives accommodated in some exegetical works, the part relating to adultery has been deleted. It appears that someone looked at the Judaic narrative, took out the allegation of adultery, and did an edit-copy-paste job while explaining the above mentioned verses of the noble Qur'ān - although, this book of Samuel itself is inherently baseless, while this narrative has the status of absolute lie and fabrication. For this reason, all authentic commentators have sternly rejected it.

In addition to Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr, 'Allāmah Ibn Jauzī, Qāḍī Abu-s-Sa'ūd, Qāḍī al-Baidawī, Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ, Imām Rāzī, 'Allāmah Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī, Khāzin, Zamakhsharī, Ibn Ḥazm, 'Allāmah Khafājī, Aḥmad Ibn Naṣr, Abū Tammām, 'Allāmah 'Ālūsī and many others have declared it to be a lie and fabrication. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr writes:

"Some commentators have mentioned a tale at this point most of which has been taken from Judaic narrations. Nothing the following of which is obligatory is proved in this matter on the authority of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Only Ibn Abī Ḥatim has reported a Ḥadīth here, but its authority is unsound."

In short, in the light of many proofs - some detail of which is available in Tafsīr Kabīr of Imām Rāzī and Zād-ul-Masīr of Ibn-ul-Jauzī - this Ḥadīth report goes out of the pale of discussion totally as far as the Tafsīr of this verse is concerned.

Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānavi has explained this element of test by saying that these two adversaries climbed over the wall, barged in and started addressing him so insolently that they started off by asking

Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام to be just and not to be unjust. This audacity would have been reason enough for an ordinary person who would have answered them only by punishing them. Allah Ta'ālā tested Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام by seeing whether he too is enraged and punishes him or listens to them demonstrating the high moral traits of pardon and forbearance.

Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام came out successful in this test, except a little slip that remained - when he was giving his verdict, rather than address the perpetrator of injustice, he addressed the one oppressed which betrayed a certain element of partisanship - but, he immediately got alerted, fell down in prostration and Allah Ta'ālā forgave him. (Bayān-ul-Qur'ān)

According to the explanation of this 'slip' given by some commentators, when Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام found the defendant silent, it was without listening to what he had to say, and rather having listened to the plaintiff only, he said things as part of his advice that virtually appeared to be supportive of the plaintiff - although, he should have first asked the defendant as to what his stand was. This statement of Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام was, though, simply advisory in nature, and time has not yet arrived for the final judgment in the case, however, for a great prophet of his caliber, it was not befitting. To this very thing he was later alerted and fell into prostration. (Rūḥ-ul- Ma'ānī)

Some others have said that Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام had managed his time in a manner that every twenty four hours of a day and night one or the other member of his household would be found engaged in some act of devotion to Allah like *'ibādah*, *dhikr* and *tasbiḥ*. On a certain day, he submitted before Allah Ta'ālā, 'My Lord, there is not a single moment of day and night during which one or the other member of the household of Dāwūd is not busy with *'ibādah*, *Ṣalāh*, *tasbiḥ* and *dhikr* before Thee!' Allah Ta'ālā said, 'O Dāwūd, all this comes from My *taufīq*. If I do not help you do it, you cannot do it on your own - and one of these days I am going to leave you on your own.' Thereafter, came a day when something different took place. That was a time when Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام was supposed to be engaged in worship. When this unforeseen thing happened, his timetable was shattered, and he got busy with resolving a dispute. No other member of the household of Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام was

engaged in remembering Allah at that time. Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام was alerted immediately. He recalled the self-congratulatory statement that had slipped out of his tongue. He realized he had made a mistake. Therefore, he sought the forgiveness of Allah and fell in prostration. This explanation is supported by a saying of Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه which has been reported in the Mustadrak of Ḥākim with sound chains of authority. (Ahkam-ul- Qur'ān)

It has been unanimously agreed upon in these explanations that this litigation was not hypothetical. In fact, it was real and the form of the litigation had nothing to do with the test or slip of Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام. Contrary to this, many commentators have explained it in a manner that postulates that parties to this dispute were not human beings. Rather, they were angels, and Allah Ta'ālā had sent them to present such a simulated form of litigation as would alert Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام to his slip.

Accordingly, these commentators say that as far as this story of the killing of Uriah and marrying his wife is concerned, it is incorrect. But, conditions that actually prevailed among the people of Banī Isra'īl were such that asking someone - 'divorce you wife and give her in marriage to me' - was not considered offensive. This kind of request had also become customary at that time, and was not taken to be impolite as well. It was in this prevailing climate and on this basis that Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام had made his request to Uriah whereupon Allah Ta'ālā alerted him by sending these two angels. Some others have said that this was a simple matter. Uriah had already sent a proposal to a woman. Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام happened to send his proposal to the same woman. This hurt Uriah. Thereupon, as admonition, Allah Ta'ālā sent these two angels and alerted him to his slip in a subtle manner. Qāḍī Abū Ya'lā has based his argument on the words of the Qur'ān: وَعَزَّيْنِي فِي الْخِطَابِ (And he overpowered me in speech - 23). He says that this sentence supports the view that this matter came to pass only in connection with: خِطْبَهُ (*khitbah*: proposal of marriage), for Dāwūd عليه السلام has not yet married her. (Zād-ul- Masīr by Ibn-ul-Jauzī, p. 116, v. 7)

Most commentators have preferred the last two explanations, and they find support in some reports from the Ṣaḥābah (please see Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī, Tafsīr Abī-s- Saūd, Zād-ul-Masīr, Tafsīr Kabīr etc.) But, the truth

of the matter is that any detail of this test or slip is neither proved from the Qur'ān, nor from some Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth. Therefore, at least this much stands settled that this widely known story of having Uriah killed is incorrect. But, about the actual event, all probabilities mentioned above exist, and no one of these can be called absolute and certain. Therefore, the safest way out is what Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr has taken: 'That which Allah Ta'ālā has left ambiguous should be left as is. We should not force out its details through our guesses and conjectures - particularly when no deed of ours hinges on it. Certainly there is some wisdom in this ambiguity as well. Therefore, one should believe in as much as has been mentioned in the Qur'ān. As for the details, let these be resigned to Allah. Nevertheless, since there are many benefits that issue forth from this event, more attention should be paid to these. Therefore, let us now turn to an explanation of the verses where, *insha'Allah*, these beneficial notes will keep appearing as we go along.

In the first verse (21), it was said: إِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا الْمِحْرَابَ (when they entered the sanctuary by climbing over the wall?). The word: مِحْرَابَ (*miḥrāb*) is essentially applied to an elevated chamber, or the front elevation of a house. Later, the front portion of a mosque or any other House of Worship came to be called by that name in particular. In the Qur'ān, this word has been used in the sense of a place of worship. 'Allāmah Suyūṭī has written that contemporary arched mihrabs of mosques in vogue now were not present during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ (Rūḥ-ul- Ma'ānī).

About Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام, it was said in verse 22: فَفَرَعَ مِنْهُمْ (and he was scared of them). The reason of being scared was quite obvious. Two men barging into one's privacy in that manner at an odd hour beating the security cordon can only be because of some bad intention in most cases.

### **Natural fear is not contrary to the station of a prophet or man of Allah**

This tells us that being naturally affected at the sight of something fearful is not contrary to the station of a prophet or man of Allah. Yes, allowing this fear to overtake one's heart and mind and abandoning duties enjoined is certainly bad. Hence, a doubt may arise here. Is it not that the Qur'ān portrays the elegant status of the noble prophets by saying: لَا يَخْشَوْنَ أَحَدًا إِلَّا اللَّهَ (They do not fear anyone but Allah - Al-Aḥzāb,

33:39)? Why then, was Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام in fear on this occasion? For an answer, it could be said that there are two kinds of fear. There is the fear that comes from being hurt by what causes pain. In Arabic, this is called: *خَوْفٌ* (*khauf*: fear). Then there is the other kind of fear. This emerges because of someone great, majestic, awesome. This is called: *خَشْيَةٌ* (*khashyah*: awe) (al-Mufradāt, Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī). There should be no *khashiyah* for anyone other than Allah - and noble prophets, may peace be on them all, are exactly like that. They are not awed by anyone. Yes, as said earlier, one can have a feeling of fear from naturally hurtful things.

### **Observe patience against contravention of established rules of etiquette until attending circumstances unfold**

The statement in verse 22: *قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ* (They said: "Be not scared") was made by the sudden entrants who said this and then started telling Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام what they wanted to while he kept listening to them silently. This tells us that, should someone commit something irregular all of a sudden, one should not start rebuking and chastising him for that on the spur of the moment, instead, one should first listen to what he has to say, so that one can find out whether or not this person had any justification for his irregular behavior. Had it been someone else, he would have unleashed his anger against such unauthorized entrants on the spot. But, Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام waited till the reality was unfolded, may be these people had some genuine excuse.

The entrant also said: *وَلَا تُنْطِطْ* (and do not cross the limits - 38:22). This manner of address was obviously very audacious as coming from a stranger. First of all, they came at a late hour, and that too by climbing over the wall. Then, once they were in, they started teaching a prophet as august as Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام lessons in morality by asking him to be just and not to be unjust. All this was heedless simplicity. But, Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام observed patience over whatever they did and said, and just avoided telling anything bad to them in response.

### **A man of stature should observe patience to the best of his ability over errors made by those in need**

This tells us that a person whom Allah has blessed with some high rank - and the needs of people are tied to him should do his best to remain patient over their irregular behavior and errors of expression, for this is

the demand of his rank or office. Particularly so, a Ḥākim (official of the government), a Qāḍī (judge of the judiciary) and a Muftī (authentic consultant responsible for giving fatwa in the light of Islam's sources of jurisprudence) should pay full attention to this need. (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī)

Verse 24 opens with the words: قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعَجِكَ إِلَىٰ نَعَاجِهِ (He said, 'He has certainly wronged you by demanding your ewe to be added to his ewe.'). Two things are worth pondering here. First of all, Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام made this statement simply after having listened to the plaintiff. He did not hear the statement of the respondent. About it, some elders have said that this was the slip for which he sought forgiveness from Allah. But, other commentators have said that, in reality, full details of the litigation are not being described here. Taken up here is only what was necessary. Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام must have surely heard the stand of the defendant. But, it was not described here for the reason that this is the recognized method when judgments are delivered. Everyone can understand that the part relating to asking the defendant at this place is elided (understood).

In addition to that, it is also possible that, though the visitors had asked Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام for a court judgment, but that was no time for a court session, nor was it a judicial sitting, nor Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام had the necessary resources available at hand in order to implement his judgment, therefore, he did not give his judgment in the status of a qadi (judge), instead, what he gave was a fatwa (ruling) in his status as a mufti (juri-consult) - and it is not the job of a mufti to go about investigating into the nature of an event, rather, the thing depends on the question asked, and it is in accordance with it that he has to give his answer.

### **Soliciting contribution, or even gift, under pressure of any kind is usurpation**

Something else worth pondering here is that Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام equated the act of a person demanding simply an ewe with injustice or oppression - although, casually asking someone for something is not a crime. The reason is that the form in which it was being asked did have the outward anatomy of a request. But, in the presence of the amount of verbal and practical pressure being put behind this asking, this thing had assumed the proportions of usurpation, something being taken forcibly,

compulsively, illegally or by extortion.

From here we learn that, should a person ask for something from someone in a manner that the addressee, whether willing or unwilling, is left with no way out other than giving it, then, (soliciting aside) even demanding a gift in that manner is also included under *ghasb* or usurpation. Therefore, if the person asking is a man of office or power, or someone respectable and elegant-looking - and the addressee cannot afford to say no because of the pressure of this man's personality - then, even if the form of the situation is that of soliciting a gift, but in reality, it translates as nothing but *ghasb* or usurpation, and, the use of the thing acquired in this manner is never permissible for the person asking for it. This point needs the particular attention of those who solicit and receive contributions for *madaris* and *makātib* (religious schools), *masajid* (mosques) or societies and associations in the religious field. For them, only that donation is *halal* and good that has been given to them by the donor voluntarily and cheerfully. If those seeking such contributions use the pressure of their personality or eight or ten of them simultaneously descend on someone, render him helpless, and succeed in gouging that contribution out of him, then, this would be a flagrantly impermissible act on their part. The Ḥadīth carries a very clear statement of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in this matter:

لَا يَحِلُّ مَالُ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ إِلَّا بِطَيْبِ نَفْسٍ مِنْهُ

The property of a Muslim is not *halal* unless it is with his sweet will.

### Partnership in transactions needs great caution

In verse 24, it was said: وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْخُلَطَاءِ لَيَبْغِي بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ (And many partners oppress one another). By saying this, we have been alerted that it is not unusual when mutual rights are compromised between two persons having a partnership deal. There are occasions when one of them would take something as ordinary, and goes ahead and does it. But, in reality, it becomes the cause of sin. Therefore, great caution is needed in this matter.

Later, in the same verse, it was said: وَظَنَّ دَاوُدُ أَنَّمَا فَتَتْهُ (And Dāwūd realized that We had put him to a test, - 38:24). If the form of the litigation is taken to be a similitude of the slip of Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام, then, the



occurring of such a thought is fairly obvious. And if the form of the litigation has nothing to do with it, even then, the overall condition of the parties involved was enough to show that the two of them have been sent by way of a test. On the one hand, these disputants were in such hurry to get their litigation resolved that they were audacious enough to jump the wall and barge in. On the other hand, when the case was presented, the defendant sat silent and accepted, verbally or practically, the plea of the plaintiff without any ifs and buts.

If the defendant agreed with the event as described by the plaintiff, he hardly had the need to come to Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام to seek a verdict in the dispute. Even a person of average intelligence could have gathered that, in this situation, Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام will invariably decide in favor of the plaintiff. This mysterious conduct of the two disputants was betraying that it was an event of some extraordinary nature. Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام had no difficulty in seeing through it, that they had come as sent from Allah and their objective was to test him. In some narrations, it also appears that, after having heard the verdict, they exchanged furtive smiles, and in no time disappeared into the skies. Allah knows best.

In the last sentence of verse 24, it was said: فَاسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهُ، وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ (so he prayed to his Lord for forgiveness, and bowing down, he fell in prostration, and turned [to Allah]). It should be noted that the word 'used here is that of: رُكُوع (rukū') which literally means 'to bow down' while, with most commentators, it denotes سُجْدَة (sajdah: prostration). According to the Ḥanafīyyah, by reciting this verse, *sajdah* becomes obligatory.

### **By doing *rukū'* the *sajdah* of *tilawah* (recitation) stands performed**

And Imām Abū Ḥanīfah has proved from this verse that, in case a verse requiring *sajdah* has been recited within the Ṣalāh, then, forming the intention of *sajdah* in the *rukū'* makes the obligation of *sajdah* stand performed. The reason is that here Allah Ta'ālā has used the word: رُكُوع (rukū') for: سُجْدَة (sajdah) which proves that *rukū'* too can become the replacement of *sajdah*. But, in this connection, a few necessary points should be borne in mind.

### **The *sajdah* of *tilawah* (recitation): Some rulings.**

1. Sajdah when being performed through an obligatory *rukū'* in

Ṣalāh can only be performed validly on condition that the verse of sajdah has been recited within the Ṣalāh. When reciting the Qur'ān outside the Ṣalāh, the *sajdah* of *tilāwah* cannot be performed validly through a *rukū'*. The reason is that *rukū'* is an act of *'ibādah* only in Ṣalāh - outside Ṣalāh, it is not recognized as an act of worship. (Badā'i').

2. A *rukū'* can stand for *sajdah* of *tilāwah* only when *rukū'* has been done soon after having recited the verse of sajdah or having recited at the most two or three additional verses. And if, after the verse of *sajdah*, one has made a long recitation in the standing position, the *rukū'* would not stand for *sajdah*.

3. If one is thinking of performing the *sajdah* of *tilāwah* in the position of *rukū'*, then, he should better make the intention of the *sajdah* of *tilawah* while bowing down for the *rukū'*, otherwise, the obligation of sajdah will not stand discharged by this *rukū'*. Yes, once the person starts going for sajdah, the sajdah will stand performed even without the intention.

4. The preferred practice, however, in any case is that the *sajdah* of tilawah is performed as a regular *sajdah* before *rukū'*, and then, one rises from the state of *sajdah*, recites one or two verses and then goes for *rukū'*, rather than it is performed in the obligatory *rukū'* of the Ṣalāh. (BadB'i').

In verse 25, it was said: وَإِنَّ لَهُ عِنْدَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ وَحُسْنَ مَّآبٍ (and surely he has a place of nearness in Our presence, and an excellent resort.). By concluding this event on this verse, a hint was released towards the fact that, no matter whatever the slip of Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام would have been, once he had sought forgiveness from Allah and had passionately turned to Him, it goes without saying that the level of his communion with Allah Ta'ālā had increased further.

### When warn, warn with wisdom!

Yet another aspect of this event needs to be mentioned here. Let this slip of Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام be whatever it was, it was a matter between him and his Lord who could have alerted him to it even directly through a revelation. But, rather than do something of this nature, why was a particular method used when the case of a dispute was sent in his court to alert him thereby? The truth of the matter is that this method invites deliberation. It helps us realize that it provides guidance for those who

are engaged in preaching and bidding the Fair and forbidding the Unfair. Those who do their duty in this field should know that the conduct of a person is not to be corrected casually. It takes a lot of wisdom to do it. To alert someone to his error, it is better to take to a method that helps the concerned person realize his error on his own, without having recourse to warn him verbally. For that purpose, it is more effective to use such examples as may convey the message without hurting the addressee in the least.

### Verse 26

يَدَاوُدُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا نَسُوا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٦﴾

O Dāwūd, We have made you a vicegerent on earth, so judge between people with truth, and do not follow the selfish desire, lest it should lead you astray from Allah's path. Surely those who go astray from Allah's path will have a severe punishment, because they had forgotten the Day of Reckoning. [26]

### Commentary

Not only that Allah Ta'ālā had made Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام a prophet, He had also placed a government and state at his command. Accordingly, in this verse, he has been entrusted with a basic guideline for the conduct of governance and politics. Three things have been said in this guideline:

1. We have made you Our *khalifah* (caliph, deputy, successor, vicar, vicegerent) on the earth.
2. In this capacity, your basic duty is to decide matters in accordance with the truth.
3. And to accomplish this mission, abstention from following personal desires is a binding condition.

As for the sense of making someone a *khalifah* on the earth, it has been discussed in the commentary on Sūrah Al-Baqarah (please see Ma'āriful-Qur'ān, English, Volume I, pages 158-171) and from it emerges the

essential principle of Islamic political theory that "Sovereignty belongs to Allah Ta'ālā." All rulers of the earth are bound to operate in accordance with His injunctions alone. They cannot go out of it. Therefore, the ruler of Muslims, the consultative body or assembly might explain or codify Islamic law as such, but the reality is that they are not lawgivers, instead, are introducers of the law of Allah.

### **The basic function of an Islamic state is to establish truth**

Secondly, it has been made very clear here that the basic function of an Islamic state is to establish truth. It is incumbent on the government that it should establish the rule of truth and justice in all its matters from administration to resolution of disputes.

Since Islam is a religion for all times to come, it has not fixed such administrative details as would have to be changed with changing circumstances. Instead of that, it has blessed its followers with the basic guidelines in the light of which administrative details can be settled according to the needs of every period of time. Therefore, no doubt, this much has been made clear here that the essential function of the government is to establish truth, but along with it, its administrative details have been left in the safe hands of sound thinking Muslims of every period.

### **The relationship of the Judiciary and the Executive**

Accordingly, no such fixed injunction as would stand unalterable in every period of time has been given on the issue of whether the Judiciary remains separate from the Executive or remains part of it. If, in some period of time, full trust can be placed in the honesty and trustworthiness of the rulers, the duality of the judiciary and the executive branches of the government can be eliminated - and if, in a certain period, full trust cannot be placed in the honesty and trustworthiness of the rulers, the Judiciary can also be kept totally independent of the Executive.

Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام was a great prophet of Allah. Who could have claimed to be as honest and trustworthy as he was? Therefore, he was simultaneously made the head of both the Executive and the Judiciary who also had the responsibility of delivering a verdict in disputes. In addition to the noble prophets عليهم السلام, the same practice continued among the rightly guided *khulafa'* of the Muslim community (*al-khulafa'*

*ar-rashidūn*) when the *amirul-mu'minīn* (the leader of Muslims or head of the Muslim state) used to be the *Qāḍī* (judge) as well. This practice was discontinued by later Islamic governments when the *amirul-mu'minīn* was made the head of the Executive, and the *qadi-l-qudat* (Chief Justice) that of the Judiciary.

The third guideline on which the heaviest stress has been laid in this verse simply says: Do not follow the desires of your self and keep the day of Reckoning in sight all the time. The reason for such a stress is that this thing is the very foundation of any effort to establish the supremacy of truth. Only a *Ḥākim* (ruler) or *Qāḍī* (judge) who has the fear of Allah and the concern of Hereafter in his heart can establish the supremacy of truth and justice in the real sense of the term. Nothing short of this would work. You are welcome to make laws, the best you can. The ability of the desiring human self to conceal its stratagems and carve out an operational outlet through any law or system is virtually unbeatable. As long as this thing is there, the best of law and system cannot establish the rule of law, truth and justice. The history of the world and the current scenario of our time bear witness to this submission.

### **The first thing to watch around offices charged with responsibility is the character of the human being sitting there**

Right from here we also learn that in order to place someone in a position of authority, such as an official of the government, or a judge of the judiciary (or someone in any other role of public or private responsibility), the first thing one has to look for is whether or not this person has the fear of Allah in his heart, the concern for 'Ākhirah, the life to come on his mind and, of course, the state of his morals and character. If it is realized that he has nothing of the sort as the fear of Allah in his heart, instead, his desiring self sits there as the monarch of all it surveys, then, no matter how high his degrees in education, and no matter how superb his expertise and experience in the field, he is not deserving of any high office of responsibility in the sight of Islam.

### **Verses 27 - 29**

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ  
كَفَرُوا ۚ قَوْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ ﴿٢٧﴾ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ  
كَالْفُجَّارِ ﴿٢٨﴾ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ  
أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٢٩﴾

And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in vain. That is the thinking of those who disbelieve. So, woe to the disbelievers because of the Fire (they have to face). [27] Shall We make those who believe and do righteous deeds equal to those who commit mischief on the earth? Or shall We make the God-fearing equal to the sinners? [28] This is a blessed Book We have revealed to you, so that they deliberate in its verses and, and so that the men of understanding may take to advice. [29]

### Commentary

#### The delicate order of the verses

These verses in which the basic beliefs of Islam, particularly that of the Hereafter, have been emphatically confirmed appear in between the description of events relating to Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام with an order that is extremely delicate and sublime. Says Imām Rāzī, if someone is refusing to understand because of obstinacy, the wiser approach is to put away the subject under discussion aside, and start talking about something totally unrelated - and when his mind stands diverted from the first subject, he should be brought around during the flow of conversation to concede to the original proposition. At this place, it is to dwell upon and secure confirmation of the Hereafter that this very method has been used. Being mentioned before the description of the event relating to Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام there were some postures of obstinacy demonstrated by the disbelievers that concluded at the verse: وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا عَجَلْ لَنَا قِطْنًا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ (And they said, " O our Lord, give us our share [of the punishment] sooner, before the Day of Reckoning." - 38:16). The outcome of all this was to state that those people rejected the existence of the Hereafter and made fun of it. Immediately after that, it was said: اصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُدَ (Observe patience over what they say and remember Our servant, Dāwūd - 38:17). By saying so, a new subject was introduced. But, the event relating to Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام has been concluded with the statement:

O Dāwūd, We have made you a vicegerent on earth, so judge between people with truth. (38:26).

Now, from here it is in an imperceptible manner that the Hereafter has been positively confirmed by positing that here is the supreme Being of Allah asking his deputy on the earth to establish the rule of law and justice resulting in punishment for the evil and peace for the good - when so, is it not that the same Being would necessarily establish justice and equity in this universe? Most certainly, it is the dictate of His wisdom that He, rather than herd everyone good or bad with the same stick, punishes the doers of evil and rewards the doers of good. This, then, is the purpose of the creation of this universe, and in order that it translates into reality, it is necessary that there be a Qiyāmah (the Last Day) and an 'Ākhirah (the Hereafter) - something that precisely corresponds to His wisdom. Those who reject the Hereafter are virtually saying that this universe has been created aimlessly, devoid of any wisdom behind it, for everyone good or bad will live his or her time and die with nobody around to ask questions - although, one who has faith in the wisdom of Allah Ta'ālā can never accept this line of reasoning.

In verse 28, it was said: *أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا (الى قوله تعالى) كَالْفَجَّارِ* (Shall We make those who believe and do righteous deeds equal to those who commit mischief on the earth? Or shall We make the God-fearing equal to the sinners?) - that is, this can never be. In fact, the end of both will be totally different. Right from here, we learn that this difference between a believer and disbeliever is there in terms of the injunctions of the Hereafter. While living in the present world, it is quite possible that a disbeliever has a lot more comforts than a believer. Likewise, it cannot be deduced thereby that the material rights of the disbeliever cannot be equal to the rights of the believer, instead, the truth of the matter is that a disbeliever could be allowed human rights equal to a believer. Accordingly, non-Muslim minorities who live in an Islamic state under mutual pledges shall be given all human rights that will be but equal to those of Muslim.

### Verses 30 - 33

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ ۖ نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ ۚ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٣٠﴾ اِذْ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِ

بِالْعَشِيِّ الصُّفْنَتِ الْجَيَّادُ ﴿٣١﴾ فَقَالَ إِنِّي أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ الْخَيْرِ عَنْ  
ذِكْرِ رَبِّي ۖ حَتَّى تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ ﴿٣٢﴾ رُدُّوْهَا عَلَيَّ ۖ فَطَفِقَ  
مَسْحًا بِالسُّوقِ وَالْأَعْنَاقِ ﴿٣٣﴾

And We blessed Dāwūd with Sulaymān. He was an excellent slave (of Allah). Surely, he was great in turning (to Us, in penitence and praise). [30] (Worth remembering is the incident) when the swift horses of high breeding were presented before him in the evening. [31] He said, " I held the love of the good things ( i.e. these horses) dearer than the remembrance of my Lord, until it (the sun ) went behind the veil. [32] Bring them back to me" - and he started passing his hands over the shanks and the necks. [33]

### Commentary

In these verses, an event relating to Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام has been mentioned. The gist of the well known Tafsīr of this event is that Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام was so engrossed in the inspection of the horses that he missed to perform the Ṣalāh of Al-‘Aṣr at his usual time. Later, when he was alerted to this loss, he slaughtered all those horses as the unfortunate interference in the remembrance of Allah took place because of them.

This missed Ṣalāh could be a *nafl ṣalāh*. Given this situation, there should be no difficulty in understanding what Sulaymān عليه السلام did, for the noble prophets try to make amends for even this much of negligence. And it is also possible that the Ṣalāh concerned was obligatory (*fard*) and his engrossment in the inspection might have caused him to forget. Although if someone forgets to perform the *fard* (obligatory) Ṣalāh, it does not cause a sin to have been committed, but Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام, in view of his high station, expiated for that too.

This Tafsīr of the cited verses has been reported from several leading authorities among the commentators. Even a great scholar of Ibn Kathīr's stature has preferred this Tafsīr. Then, it is also supported by a *marfu'* Ḥadīth (attributed to the noble Prophet ﷺ) reported by 'Allamah Suyuti with reference to the Mu'jim of āṬabarānī, Isma'īlī and Ibn Marduwayh:



عن ابي بن كعب رضى الله عنه عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم فى قوله فطفق  
مسحاً بالسوق والاعناق قال قطع سوقها وأعناقها بالسيف)

From 'Ubaiyy Ibn Ka'b رضي الله عنه, from the Holy Prophet ﷺ: About the word of Allah: (and he started passing his hands over the shanks and the necks.), he said: "Cut their legs and necks with the sword."

'Allāmah Suyūṭī has declared its rating as Ḥasan. (ad-Durr-ul-Manthūr, p. 309, v. 5) and quoting this Ḥadīth in Majma'-uz-Zawa'id, 'Allāmah Haithami says:

'Tabarānī has reported this in al-Awsat. Sa'īd Ibn Bashīr is one of the narrators there. He has been called trustworthy by Shu'bah and others. Ibn Ma'in and others call him weak. The rest of the men reporting are trustworthy.' (Majma'-uz-Zawa'id, p. 99, v. 7, Kitabu-t-Tafsīr)

Because of this Ḥadīth, this Tafsīr becomes fairly strong. But, it generally lends to the doubt that the horses were a gift of Allah and wasting one's property in that manner does not seem to befit the station of a prophet. Commentators have answered it by saying that Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام owned these horses, and the sacrifice of horses was also permissible in his code of law very similar to that of cows, goats and camels. Therefore, he never wasted the horses, in fact, sacrificed them in the name of Allah. Just as the act of sacrificing a cow or goat is not tantamount to wasting it, instead, it is an act of *'ibādah*, the sacrifice of horses offered by him was nothing but an act of *'ibādah* (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī).

Most commentators have explained this verse in this very manner. But, there is another Tafsīr of these verses reported from Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه where the description of the event differs. A gist of the Tafsīr is that the horses presented before Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام were specially prepared for Jihād. Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام was pleased to see them while he also said that the attachment he had to those horses was not because he loved worldly life, rather it was because of his remembrance of Allah in that these were prepared for Jihād, and Jihād was an act of worship at its highest. In the meantime, that lineup of horses went out of his sight. He asked that they be brought back again. Accordingly, when they appeared before him once again, he started stroking and patting their necks and legs with affection.

According to this Tafsīr, the word: عَنْ ذِكْرِ (‘an: from or because) in: عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّي (‘an dhikri-rabbī: from or because of the remembrance of my Lord) is the ‘an of cause’ عَنْ سَبَبِهِ (‘an sababiyah), and the pronoun in: تَوَارَتْ (tawarāt: disappeared) is invariably reverting to horses, and: مَسَحَ (mash) does not mean to cut, instead, it means to pass or wipe hands (over the body of the horses) with affection.

Classical commentators like Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Imām Rāzī and others have preferred this very Tafsīr, because it is free from any possible doubt about property being wasted.

In terms of the words of the noble Qur’ān, there is room for both explanations. But, since a *marfu’* Ḥadīth has appeared in favor of the first Tafsīr, a Ḥadīth that is *ḥasan* (good) as regards its authority, therefore, it has become weightier and more acceptable.

### The story of the return and resetting of the Sun

Some early interpreters have, while following the first Tafsīr, also said that soon after having missed the Ṣalāh of al-‘Aṣr, Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام prayed to Allah Ta‘ālā, or requested the angels, that the Sun should be made to return. Accordingly, the Sun was returned and he was enabled to perform his appointed Ṣalāh. After that, the Sun set once again. These people take the pronoun in: رُدُّوْهَا (rudduhā: Bring it back to me - 38:33) as reverting to the Sun.

But, investigative commentators, for instance, ‘Allāmah ‘Ālūsī and others have rejected this fictional approach, and have said that the pronoun in: رُدُّوْهَا (rudduhā: Bring them back to me) is reverting to ‘horses’ and not to the Sun - not because, refuge with Allah, making the Sun to return is not within the power and control of Allah Ta‘ālā, but because this story does not stand proved from the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth. (Rūḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī)

### In the event one neglects the remembrance of Allah, some self-imposed penalty is in order as part of one's remorse

Anyway, this much does stand proved from the event that, should there come a time when one happens to have been neglectful of the remembrance of Allah, then, in order to punish one's aberrant self, depriving it of some lawful thing is permissible. This, in the terminology of the noble Ṣūfīs, is called: غَيْرَت (ghayrah: sense of honor or shame).

(Bayān-ul-Qurān)

Imposing such penalties on one's own self for the purpose of training it to do what is good is a prescription of self-reform - and this event seems to suggest its justification, in fact, recommendation. It has also been reported from the Holy Prophet ﷺ that, on a certain occasion, Sayyidnā Abū Jahm رضي الله عنه presented to him the gift of a Syrian throw-over shawl having some sort of design embroidered or painted on it. He made his Ṣalāh covering himself with this shawl. Then, he came to Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها and said to her, "Return this shawl to Abū Jahm, because I happened to have cast a look at the design it had during the course of my Ṣalāh, and this design would have almost thrown me into some trial" (Aḥkām-ul-Qurān with reference to al-Muwaṭṭā' of Imām Mālik).

Similarly, there is an incident related to Sayyidnā Abū Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه. Once, while making Ṣalāh in his fruit-farm, he happened to have turned his attention to look at a bird, and as a result, his attention was diverted away from the Ṣalāh (a contravention of the essential etiquette of Ṣalāh being offered before Allah Ta'ālā). After that, he gave the whole farm as sadaqah (charity).

But one has to bear in mind that the penalty thought of for this purpose should be permissible by itself. Wasting away some property for no valid reason is not permissible. Therefore, no such action is correct as would result in the wastage of property. Among the Ṣūfīs, the famous Shibli رحمه الله تعالى had once burnt his clothes as part of this kind of self-imposed penalty. But, the more discerning among Ṣūfīs, such as Shaikh 'Abdul-Wahhāb Sha'rānī رحمه الله تعالى, did not approve of that action of his as correct and sound. (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī)

### **The ruler should personally keep watching over the functions of the state**

The second line of conduct that emerges from this event is that the person responsible for the affairs of the state or its high officials (who share this responsibility with him) should personally keep watching over their subordinate departments in a way that they never sit relaxed after having passed on the trust to their deputies and assistants. This is the reason why Sayyidnā Sulaymān رضي الله عنه who had a host of subordinates at his command, inspected the horses in person. This concern (to be

personally vigilant against any malfunction of the state system) stands proved also from the examples set by the rightly guided caliphs of Islam, particularly from the practice of Sayyidnā ‘Umar رضي الله عنه.

### At the time of one act of ‘ibādah (worship), engaging in another is an error

The second line of conduct that stands proved from this event is that the time of an ‘ibādah that is already bound with a certain hour should not be spent in getting busy with some other act of ‘ibādah. It is obvious that the inspection of horses prepared for Jihad amounted to a significant act of worship in its own right. But, as this was not the time for this kind of ‘ibādah, rather, was the time of the prescribed ‘ibādah of Ṣalāh, therefore, Sayyidnā Sulaymān رضي الله عنه counted this too as an error, for which he made amends. Hence, Muslim jurists say that the way it is not permissible to stay occupied with buying and selling activity after the *adhan* (call for prayer) of Jumu‘ah Ṣalāh, similarly, it is also not correct to stay occupied with some chore other than the preparation for the Jumu‘ah Ṣalāh, even if it happens to be the ‘ibādah of reciting the Qur’ān or making *nafl ṣalāh*.

### Verse 34

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمَانَ وَأَلْقَيْنَا عَلَى كُرْسِيِّهِ جَسَداً ثُمَّ أَنَابَ ﴿٣٤﴾

And We, indeed, tested Sulaymān while We threw on his throne a body after which he turned (to Us). [34]

### Commentary

In this verse, Allah Ta‘ālā has mentioned yet another test of Sayyidnā Sulaymān رضي الله عنه with a simple statement saying that, during this test, some body, or part of it, was put on the throne of Sayyidnā Sulaymān رضي الله عنه. As for what that body was and what its placement on the throne means and how it was a test, these details are not available in the noble Qur’ān, nor are they proved from any Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth. Therefore, some authentic commentators, for instance, Ibn Kathīr seems to incline to the approach that anything the Qur’ān has left ambiguous should be left as is, without having to dig into its details. One should simply believe this much that Allah Ta‘ālā had put Sayyidnā Sulaymān رضي الله عنه to some test after which he turned to Allah more than before - and the real purpose of

the Qur'ān stands accomplished by saying that which has already been said.

Still, some commentators have tried to go after the details of this test, and have come up with several probabilities in this connection. Some of these probabilities happen to have been extracted exclusively from Judaic narrations. For example, the story that secret of the power of Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام was in his ring. On a certain day, the Satan got hold of his ring, and ended up sitting on the throne of Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام as the ruler looking like him. Forty days later, that ring of Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام was retrieved from the belly of a fish. After that, he regained his authority as the ruler once again. This narrative annexed with additional tales appears in several books of Tafsīr. But, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr, after identifying all such narratives as Judaic reports, writes in his Tafsīr:

"There is a group among the people of the Book that does not believe in Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام as a prophet. Therefore, it is obvious, all these false tales have been forged by them" - Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, p. 36, v. 4.

Hence, labeling narratives of this nature as being the Tafsīr of this Qur'ānic verse is not correct by any standard.

There is another event relating to Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام that finds mention in the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī and elsewhere too. Finding some parts of this event resembling the text of this verse, some commentators have declared it to be the Tafsīr of this verse. The gist of the event is that once Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام confided as to when he would go to his wives, each of them would give birth to a boy who will carry out Jihād in the way of Allah. But, while verbalizing his thought, he forgot to say: *Insha'Allah* (If Allah wills) Allah Ta'ālā did not like this slip coming from his great prophet, and He proved this claim of his as false as only one out of all his wives gave birth to a still child that had one side missing.

Some commentators have applied the anatomy of this event on this verse, and have said that the expression: 'threw or put the body or its part on the throne' means that some attendant of Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام brought this body of the baby, and put it on the throne. Thereupon, Sayyidnā Sulaymān got alerted, and he realized that it was the

consequence of not saying: *Insha'Allah* on his part. Accordingly, he turned to Allah and sought forgiveness for this slip.

Discerning commentators like Qāḍī Abū-s-Sa'ūd, 'Allāmah 'Alusī and others have followed this Tafsīr. Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānavi has also gone by it in his Tafsīr Bayān-ul-Qur'an. But, the reality is that even this event cannot be called the Tafsīr of this verse in a certain manner for the reason that no Ḥadīth narration that mentions this event has any indication that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has ever mentioned it as part of his explanation of the verse under study. Even Imām Bukhari has reported this Ḥadīth in his Kitāb-ul-Jihād, Kitāb-ul-Anbiyā', Kitāb-ul-Aymān wā-n-Nudhūr and elsewhere with various versions, but he has not mentioned it under the head of the Tafsīr of Sūrah Ṣād anywhere in his Kitābu-t-Tafsīr. In fact, he has reported another narration under the verse: وَمَبِّ لِيْ مُلْكًا (bless me with a kingdom - 38:35) (which follows immediately next to the verse under discussion here) and has not made any mention of this Ḥadīth. This shows that, even in the sight of Imām Bukhārī, this particular event is not a Tafsīr of the verse under study. Instead, this too, like the several other events relating to the noble prophets described by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, is a separate event that does not necessarily have to be the Tafsīr of one or the other verse.

A third Tafsīr is credited to Imām Rāzī and some others. According to this Tafsīr, once Sayyidnā Sulaymān ؑ became very sick. He grew so weak because of it that, at the time he was brought in to sit on the throne, he gave the impression of a body without the soul. Later, Allah Ta'ālā enabled him to get well. At that time, he turned to Allah, expressed his gratitude before Him, sought His forgiveness - and along with all that, also prayed for an unmatched kingdom for himself in the future.

But, this Tafsīr too is simply conjectural. It also does not carry much congruence with the words of the noble Qur'an, and there is no proof for it from any Ḥadīth narration as well.

The reality is that there is no source with us to find out the certain details of the event alluded to in the verse under study - nor are we duty-bound to go about finding it. Therefore, we have zero in our faith on this much that Allah Ta'ālā had put Sayyidnā Sulaymān ؑ to a certain test after which his passion to return to Allah came out stronger than ever

before - and that the real purpose of the Qur'ān in mentioning this event is to invite all human beings to turn to Allah like Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام as and when they face any distress or trial. As for the details of the test and trial of Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام, let these be entrusted with Allah. Allah knows best.

### Verses 35 - 40

قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَهَبْ لِي مُلْكًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِّنْ بَعْدِي ۚ إِنَّكَ  
 أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ الرِّيحَ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ رُخَاءً حَيْثُ  
 أَصَابَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَالشَّيَاطِينَ كُلَّ بَنَّاءٍ وَغَوَّاصٍ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَآخَرِينَ مُقَرَّنِينَ  
 فِي الْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾ هَذَا عَطَاؤُنَا فَامْنُنْ أَوْ أَمْسِكْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ  
 ﴿٣٩﴾ وَإِنَّ لَهُ عِنْدَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ وَحُسْنَ مَّآبٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

He said, "O my Lord, forgive me, and bless me with a kingdom that will not be available to anyone after me. Surely, You are the Bountiful. [35] Then We subjugated the wind for him that blew smoothly on his command to wherever he wished, [36] and (We subjugated to him) the satans (among Jinns), all builders and divers, [37] and many others held in chains. [38] This is Our gift. So, do favor (to someone) or withhold (it), with no (requirement to give) account. [39] He has a place of nearness in Our presence, and an excellent end. [40]

### Commentary

It was said in verse 35: هَبْ لِي مُلْكًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِّنْ بَعْدِي (bless me with a kingdom that will not be available to anyone after me.). Some commentators explain the sense of this prayer as 'let not a great kingdom like mine belong to anyone else during my time.' In other words, they take "*min ba'dī*": or 'after me' in the sense of 'other than me.' Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānavi has done his translation accordingly. But, with most commentators, the sense of the prayer is: 'Even after me, let no one have a kingdom as great as this.' Accordingly, so it happened. The kingdom that Allah Ta'ālā gave to Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام was a kingdom the like of which never became the lot of anyone else. The reason was simple. The subjugation of the wind and the command over the genre of the Jinn

were exclusive traits of his kingdom, and no kingdom that followed him had these characteristics. There are some people who carry out mysterious exercises (*‘amaliyyāt*) through which they are known to subjugate Jinns, a phenomenon that does not fall contrary to this, because it cannot be compared, in the least, to the subjugation of the jinn Allah had allowed for Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام. Moreover, these experts in *‘amaliyyāt* are able to make just about one or a few Jinns become obedient to them, but the kind of wide spread kingdom that Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام had was not acquired by anyone.

### Praying for office and power

At this place, it should be borne in mind that no prayer made by the noble prophets is made without the will and permission of Allah Ta‘ālā. Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام had made this prayer too by the will and permission of Allah Ta‘ālā. And since some bland seeking of power was not his aim, rather the driving desire to implement Divine laws and the passion to make truth triumph was behind it - and Allah Ta‘ālā knew that once Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام had the power, he would work for these very high objectives, and would never entertain negative feelings of office, power and recognition - therefore, he was given the permission to make this prayer, and it was accepted as well. But, common people have been prohibited in Ḥadīth from seeking power following their own initiative. The reason is that such an initiative usually gets to be tainted with the desire for power, influence, money and property. Accordingly, where one has the certitude of being free of such selfish desires and one really would love to see the banner of truth fly high without the least hunger for power hidden anywhere in the recesses of his heart - then, for such a person, praying for power and authority of government is permissible. (Rūḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī etc.)

In verse 38, it was said: مُقَرَّنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ (held in chains). Details about the subjugation of Jinns and the services they performed have appeared earlier in the commentary on Sūrah Saba’ within this Volume VII. Here, it has been said that Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام was holding the unruly Jinns by having them chained. Now, it is not necessary that these chains be the visible chains of iron. It is possible that there could have been some other method used to tie them up more tightly or securely - and it has been expressed as 'chains' for the sake of common comprehension.



## Verses 41 - 44

وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا أَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الشَّيْطَانُ بِنُصْبٍ  
وَعَذَابٍ ﴿٤١﴾ أُرْكُضْ بِرِجْلِكَ هَذَا مُغْتَسَلٌ بَارِدٌ وَشَرَابٌ ﴿٤٢﴾  
وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُمْ مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَذِكْرًا لِلأُولَى الْأَلْبَابِ  
﴿٤٣﴾ وَخُذْ بِيَدِكَ ضِغْثًا فَاصْرُبْ بِهِ وَلَا تَحْنُطْ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَبِيرًا  
نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

And remember Our slave, Ayyūb (Job) - when he called his Lord, "The Shaiṭān (Satan) has inflicted weariness and pain upon me." [41] (Allah said to him,) "Strike (the ground) with your foot: Here is a cool water to bathe, and a drink!" [42] And We let him have his family and the like of them besides, as a mercy from Us, and a reminder for the people of understanding. [43] And (We said to him,) "Take (a bundle of) thin twigs in your hand, and strike with it, and do not violate your oath. Surely, We found him very enduring. He was really an excellent slave. Surely, he was great in turning (to Us, in penitence and praise). [44]

## Commentary

The event relating to Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام has been introduced here to comfort and prompt the Holy Prophet ﷺ, so that he would also observe patience. This event has appeared with details in our commentary on Sūrah Al-Anbiyā' (Ma'āriful-Qur'ān, Volume V1). A few significant notes are being added here.

In the opening verse (41), it was said: مَسَّنِيَ الشَّيْطَانُ بِنُصْبٍ وَعَذَابٍ (The Shaiṭān has inflicted weariness and pain upon me). Some early commentators have given details as to how the Shaiṭān had caused this affliction and pain. They say that the disease from which Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام suffered had overtaken him under the influence of the Shaiṭān. What happened was that once the angels praised Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام in a manner that made the Shaiṭān envy him. He prayed to Allah Ta'ālā that he be given such control over his body, wealth and children that allowed him to do whatever he liked with him. Allah Ta'ālā too intended to test Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام, therefore, the Shaiṭān was

given this right, and he made him suffer from this disease.

But, discerning commentators have refuted this story by saying that, in terms of the clear statement of the noble Qur'ān, the Shaiṭān cannot gain control over the blessed prophets, therefore, it is not possible that he could have made him suffer from this disease.

Some others have explained the Shaiṭān having afflicted pain by saying that the Shaiṭān used to plant all sorts of scruples in the heart of Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام, while he was very sick which hurt him all the more. This is what he has mentioned here. But, the best explanation of this verse is what Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānavi has given in Bayān-ul-Qur'ān. This is being reproduced here from the Khulāsa-e-Tafsīr in Ma'āriful-Qur'ān:

'This affliction and pain, according to the saying of some commentators, is what Imām Aḥmad has reported from Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه in his Kitābu-z-zuhd, in which it has been stated that the Shaiṭān had once met the wife of Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام in the guise of a physician during the days of his sickness. Since he had posed himself as a physician, she requested him to treat her husband. He agreed subject to the condition that once he got cured, she would tell him that she was the one who cured him, and assured her that he wanted no more in return. She mentioned this to Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام. He said, "O my simple wife, he was the Shaiṭān. Now, I solemnly resolve that, should Allah Ta'ālā make me get well again, I am going to beat you with one hundred sticks of branches.' So, he was particularly shocked that Shaiṭān had become so high-handed that he wanted to make his own wife say words that evidently amount to shirk, though they may not prove to be so if subjected to interpretation. Though, Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام had made prayers for the removal of his affliction earlier as well, yet after this incident, he turned back to Him in plaint and prayer more fervently, and his prayer was answered: (Reported by Aḥmad).

### **The nature of the ailment of Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام**

The Qur'ān tells us only this much that Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام was afflicted with a serious disease, but nothing was said about the nature of this disease. Even in Aḥādīth, no details about it have been reported from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Nevertheless, from some reports attributed to the

Ṣaḥābah, it appears that blisters had erupted all over his body, and people had put him off on a dirt-heap out of nausea. But, some discerning commentators have refused to accept these attributed reports as correct. They say that diseases can afflict the blessed prophets, but they are not made to suffer from such diseases as would make people nauseated with it. Hence, this sort of disease cannot be attributed to Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام. Instead, they say, it was some common disease. Therefore, reports in which blisters have been attributed to Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام or in which it has been said that he was put off on a dirt-heap are not trustworthy, neither in terms of the authenticity of the report, nor rationally (abridged from Rūḥ-ul-Maʿānī and Aḥkām-ul-Qurʾān).

In verse 44, it was said: خُذْ بِيَدِكَ ضِغْتًا (Take [a bundle of] thin twigs in your hand). This was said in the background when Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام intended to fulfill the oath he had taken. But, as his wife had taken good care of him, and had done nothing to deserve being chastised (with one hundred strokes of some stick as sworn by him), Allah Taʿālā, in His mercy, showed him the way-out as to how he could do it symbolically and still fulfill his oath (as in khulasa-e-Tafsīr of Bayān-ul-Qurʾān).

### **Some issues relating to legal aspects of this event are being identified here.**

Firstly: This event tells us that, should someone declare on oath that he or she would punish someone else to a count of one hundred strokes (using a small, thin, dry branch as beating stick) and then, rather applying one hundred strokes separately, he makes a bundle of all these branches and applies a single strike with it, the oath stands fulfilled. This was the reason why Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام was asked to do so. This is also the ruling given by Imām Abū Ḥanīfah. But, as says ʿAllāmah Ibn-ul-Humām, it is subject to two essential conditions: Firstly, each stick must have made contact with the body of the particular person length-wise or width-wise. Secondly, it should have caused at least some pain. If the strokes were so light that they caused no pain, the oath will not be fulfilled. When Maulānā Thānavi said in Tafsīr Bayān-ul-Qurʾān that the oath will not be fulfilled, he probably meant thereby the same thing, that is, if there is no pain at all, or one of the sticks fails to make contact with the body, the oath will not be fulfilled. Otherwise, Hanafi jurists have clearly said that, should the striking be accomplished subject

to these two conditions, the oath is fulfilled. (Please see Fath-ul-Qadīr, p. 137, v. 4).

### The Islamic Legal Status of Stratagems

Secondly: From this verse, we also learn that in order to sidetrack and remain unaffected by something inappropriate or reprehensible, should some legal stratagem be opted for, then, it becomes permissible (known as *sharʿī ḥilah* [plural: *ḥiyāl*] as admissible in the Shariʿah of Islam). It is obvious that the essential requisite of the oath in this event of Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام was that he should subject his blessed wife to full one hundred strokes to vacate his oath. But, his wife was innocent. She had taken remarkably good care of Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام during the days of his suffering. Therefore, Allah Taʿālā Himself prompted Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام to take to a via media, a *ḥilah* or smart escape route (from his predicament), and also made it clear to him that his oath will not stand broken thereby. Therefore, this event provides an argument in favor of the justification of the device of *ḥilāh*.

But, one should remember that such *hiyal* or stratagems become permissible only when they have not been reduced to an excuse for nullifying the objectives of the Shariʿah. And if the purpose of such *ḥilah* is to nullify the right of some genuine holder of right, or to make what is openly haram become halal for one's own person while the spirit of the prohibited act has been retained intact, then, such a *ḥilah* is absolutely impermissible. For instance, there are people who make a *hilah* to avoid having to pay Zakāh. Just before the end of the year, they would pass on their wealth and property into the ownership of their wives. After some time, the wife passes it on into the ownership of her husband. And when the next year is about to close, the husband gifts it to the wife. This way no one remains obligated with the payment of Zakāh. Since, doing something like this is an effort to nullify the objectives of the Shariʿah, therefore, it is *ḥarām* (unlawful) - and perhaps, the curse of this stratagem might as well be more punishing than the curse that would fall as a result of the abandonment of Zakāh. (Rūḥ-ul-Maʿānī from al-Mabsut of Sarakhsi)

### Resorting to an oath to do what is inappropriate

The third ruling that we come to know from this verse is: If someone utters an oath to do an act that is inappropriate or wrong or impermissible, the oath stands effectively concluded, and should it be

broken, one will have to make amends and pay *kaffarah* (expiation). It is evident enough that, should there have been no *kaffarah* becoming due in that situation, Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام would have not been asked to take to that hilah. But, along with it, one should also bear in mind that in the event one happens to have uttered an oath to do something inappropriate, then, the law of the Sharī'ah is that the oath should be broken, and *kaffarah* should be paid. In a Ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said:

"A person who utters an oath, then he decides that doing otherwise is better, then he should invariably do what is better - and pay *kaffarah* for his oath."

### Verses 45 - 64

وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۖ وَسُحْقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۖ أُولَى الْأَيْدَى وَالْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٤٥﴾ إِنَّا أَخْلَصْنَهُمْ بِخَالِصَةِ ذِكْرَى الدَّارِ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُمْ عِنْدَنَا لَمِنَ الْمُصْطَفَيْنِ الْأَخْيَارِ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَاذْكُرْ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ ۖ وَكُلٌّ مِنَ الْأَخْيَارِ ﴿٤٨﴾ هَذَا ذِكْرٌ ۖ وَإِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ لَحُسْنَ مَآبٍ ﴿٤٩﴾ جَنَّتٍ عَدْنٍ مُمْتَحَةً لَهُمُ الْأَبْوَابُ ﴿٥٠﴾ مُتَكَبِّرِينَ فِيهَا يَدْعُونَ فِيهَا بِفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ وَشَرَابٍ ﴿٥١﴾ وَعِنْدَهُمْ قَصْرُوتُ الطَّرَفِ ۖ أَتْرَابٌ ﴿٥٢﴾ هَذَا مَا تُوَعَدُونَ لِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٥٣﴾ إِنَّ هَذَا لَرِزْقُنَا مَا لَهُ مِنْ نَفَادٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ هَذَا ۖ وَإِنَّ لِلطَّاعِينَ لَشَرَّ مَآبٍ ﴿٥٥﴾ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ يَصْلَوْنَهَا ۖ فَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴿٥٦﴾ هَذَا ۖ فَلْيَذُقُوهُ حَمِيمٌ وَغَسَاقٌ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَآخِرُ مِنْ شَكْلِهِ أَزْوَاجٌ ﴿٥٨﴾ هَذَا فَوْجٌ مُقْتَحِمٌ مَعَكُمْ ۖ لَا مَرْحَبًا بِهِمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ صَالُوا النَّارِ ﴿٥٩﴾ قَالُوا بَلْ أَنْتُمْ لَمَرْحَبًا بِكُمْ ۖ أَنْتُمْ قَدَّمْتُمُوهُ لَنَا ۖ فَبِئْسَ الْقَرَارُ ﴿٦٠﴾ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا مَنْ قَدَّمَ لَنَا هَذَا فَزِدْهُ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا فِي النَّارِ ﴿٦١﴾ وَقَالُوا مَا لَنَا لَنَرِي رِجَالًا كُنَّا نَعُدُّهُمْ مِنَ الْأَشْرَارِ ﴿٦٢﴾ اتَّخَذْنَهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا أَمْ زَاغَتْ عَنْهُمْ الْأَبْصَارُ ﴿٦٣﴾ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَحَقٌّ

## تَخَاصُّمُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ ﴿٤٥﴾

And remember Our servants - Ibrāhīm and Ishāq and Ya'qub - men of strength and men of vision. [45] We chose them for a trait of remembering the (eternal) Home (in the Hereafter). [46] And surely they are, in Our sight, among the the chosen, the best of the righteous. [47] And remember Isma'il and al-Yasa' and Dhul-Kifl. Each of them was among the best of the righteous. [48] This is a reminder (of what has passed). And surely the God-fearing will have the best place to return: [49]-everlasting gardens, with (their) doors opened for them. [50] They will be relaxing therein, calling there for plenteous fruits and drinks; [51] and in their company there will be females restricting their glances (to their husbands, and) of matching ages. [52] This is what you are being promised for the Day of Reckoning. [53] Surely, that is provision provided by Us to which there is no end. [54] Having said this, the transgressors will surely have the most evil place to return: [55] the Jahannam, in which they will enter. So, how evil is that place to rest? [56] Let them taste this: hot water and pus, [57] and other things similar to it of various kinds. [58] (When the leaders of the infidels will see their followers entering the hell after them, they will say to each other,) "This is a multitude rushing in (the hell) with you - they are not welcome - they are to burn in the Fire." [59] They (the followers) will say (to their leaders) "No, it is you - you are not welcome - you are the ones who brought this upon us." So, how evil is the place to stay (for ever)! [60] They (the followers) will say, "Our Lord, whoever has brought this on us, do increase his punishment twofold in the Fire." [61] And they (the infidels) will say, "What is the matter with us that we do not see those men whom we used to count amongst the worst? (i.e the Muslims whom the infidels used to treat as the worst people among them) [62] Had we taken them as a laughing-stock (unjustly), or have our eyes missed them?" [63] That is going to happen definitely, that is, the mutual quarrel of the people of the Fire. [64]

### Commentary

The expression: *أُولَى الْأَيْدِي وَالْأَبْصَارِ* (translated as: men of strength and men of vision) literally means 'owners or possessors of hands and eyes.'

The sense is that they devoted their physical and intellectual energies in remaining obedient to Allah Ta'ālā. When this is said, a hint is being released to the fact that the real end use of human body parts is no other but that they are spent or utilized in obedience to the Divine commands, and the those parts of the body that are not utilized in it, their existence or non-existence remains equal.

### Concern for 'Ākhirah is a distinct attribute of the noble prophets

The word 'home' in the statement: ذَكَرَى الدَّارَ (remembering the [eternal] Home [in the Hereafter]- 38:46) refers to the 'Ākhirah, (the Hereafter, the life-to-come). Instead of using the word: 'Ākhirah, the text has used the word: الدَّارَ (ad-dar: home) whereby it has warned human beings that they must take 'Ākhirah as their real Home, and make the concern for it the basis for whatever they think and do. Right from here, we also come to know that the concern for 'Ākhirah further sharpens and furbishes one's intellectual and physical faculties (helping it to flourish in an essentially true perspective). Hence, the view of some atheists that such concern blunts human faculties is baseless.

### The Prophet : (al-Yasā': Elisha) ﷺ

In verse 48, it was said: وَالْيَسَعَ ( and [remember] al-Yasā'). Sayyidnā al-Yasā' ﷺ is a prophet from among the prophets of Banī Isra'īl, peace be upon them all. He has been mentioned in the Qur'ān only at two places, once in Sūrah Al-An'ām and then, here in Sūrah Ṣād. No details have been mentioned at any of the two places, rather his name appears there as part of a list of the blessed prophets.

Historical chronicles report that he is a cousin of Sayyidnā Ilyās ﷺ and was his deputy. He lived in his company and was made a prophet after him. Details about him appear in the Bible, the Book of Kings I, Chapter 19, and Kings II, Chapter 2, and elsewhere. There he has been mentioned by the name of إِلِيشَعُ بْنُ سَافَتِ (Elisha son of Sāfit).

In verse 52, it was said: وَعِنْدَهُمْ قَصْرَاتٌ طُرْفِ آتَابٍ (and in their company there will be females restricting their glances (to their husbands, and) of matching ages.). Meant by these are the Hūrs or Houris of Jannah (referred to, fondly enough for some people, even as 'nymphs of Paradise'). Being of matching ages could mean that they will be of the same age as among themselves. And it could also mean that they will be

of the same age as their spouses. In the first situation, if they were of the same age, the good thing about it would be that they would be relating to each other in mutual amity as friends, and not as 'the other woman' something very welcome for spouses.

### Consideration of matching age between spouses is better

Then there is the other situation. If being of the same age is taken to mean that spouses will be of the same age, the good thing about it would be that there would be temperamental harmony between them, and they will have consideration for each other's preferences. This tells us that consideration should be made to keep ages of spouses matched, for it generates mutual love, and makes the relationship of marriage pleasant and permanent.

### Verses 65 - 88

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مُنذِرٌ ۖ وَمَا مِن إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ﴿٦٥﴾ رَبُّ  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ ﴿٦٦﴾ قُلْ هُوَ نَبَأٌ  
عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦٧﴾ أَنْتُمْ عَنْهُ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ مَا كَانَ لِي مِن عِلْمٍ بِالْمَلَآئِكَةِ  
الْأَعْلَى إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ إِنَّ يُوحَىٰ إِلَىٰ آلِ إِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ  
﴿٧٠﴾ إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَأِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِّن طِينٍ ﴿٧١﴾ فَاذْأ  
سَوِّتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ فَسَجَدَ  
الْمَلَأِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ ۖ اسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ  
الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾ قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإِيدِي ۖ  
أَسْتَكْبَرْتَ ۖ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعَالِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾ قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ ۖ خَلَقْتَنِي  
مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ ﴿٧٦﴾ قَالَ فَاخْرُجْ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾  
وَأَنَّ عَلَيْكَ لَعْنَتِي إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿٧٨﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمِ  
يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ



الْمَعْلُوم ﴿٨١﴾ قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَا غُيُوبَ لَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ  
 مِنْهُمْ الْمُخْلِصِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ قَالَ فَالْحَقُّ وَالْحَقَّ أَقُولُ ﴿٨٤﴾ لَا مَلَكٌ  
 جَهَنَّمَ مِنْكَ وَمِمَّنْ تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ  
 عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُتَكَلِّفِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾ إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ  
 ﴿٨٧﴾ وَلَتَعْلَمُنَّ نَبَأَهُ بَعْدَ حِينٍ ﴿٨٨﴾

Say, " I am only a warner - and there is no god but Allah, the One, the All- Dominant, [65] the Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, the Mighty, the Very-Forgiving." [66] Say, "It is a great news [67] to which you are averse. [68] I had no knowledge of the Heavenly Beings when they were debating (about the creation of 'Adam).<sup>1</sup> [69] Revelation is sent to me only because I am a plain warner. [70]<sup>2</sup>

When your Lord said to the angels, "I am going to create man from clay. [71] So, once I make him perfectly and breath My spirit into him, you fall down in prostration before him. [72] Then, the angels prostrated, all of them together - [73] except Iblis. He waxed proud, and became one of the disbelievers. [74] He (Allah) said, "O Iblis, what did prevent you from prostrating before what I created with My hands? Did you wax proud or were you among the lofty ones?" [75] He said, "I am better than him. You created me from fire, and created him from clay." [76] He said, "Then, get out from here, for you are accursed, [77] and on you shall remain My curse till the Day of Judgement." [78] He said, "O my Lord, then give me respite till the day they are raised again." [79] He said, "Then, you have been made one of those given respite, [80] until the Day of the Appointed Time." [81]

- (1). The reference here is to the conversation that took place between Allah Ta'ālā and His angels when He expressed His intention to create 'Adam ﷺ, and which is being mentioned in verse 71 below.
- (2). The sense is that I never knew about what Allah said to His angels when He intended to create 'Adam ﷺ, nor was there any source of knowledge available to me other than the revelation from Allah. Now that I am narrating to you these events without having any other source of knowledge, it clearly proves that I am receiving revelation from Allah which has been sent to me only for the purpose that I warn you clearly about the evil fate of rejecting the truth.

He said, "Then, I swear by Your Might, that I will definitely lead them astray, all of them - [82] except Your chosen servants among them." [83] He (Allah) said, "Then, the truth is-and it is (always) the truth that I speak--- [84] that I will definitely fill the Jahannam with you and with those who will follow you from among them, all together." [85]

Say, "I do not demand from you any fee for it, nor am I from among those who make up things artificially. [86] It is nothing but an advice for all the worlds. [87] And you will come to know its reality after a while." [88]

### Commentary

#### A Gist of the Subjects of the Sūrah

In verse 65, it was said: **قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مُنْذِرٌ** (Say, " I am only a warner)

At the beginning of the Sūrah, you have seen that the real objective of this Sūrah was the affirmation of the prophethood of the noble Prophet ﷺ a refutation of what the disbelievers said. In this connection, events relating to blessed prophets of the past were mentioned for two reasons. Firstly, that they bring comfort to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and that he too observes patience against the absurd allegations leveled by those who disbelieved - the same patience as observed by the blessed prophets before him. Secondly, that those who were denying the credentials of a true prophet should themselves learn their lesson through these events. After that, another method was used to invite the disbelievers to Islam. For this purpose, their attention was drawn to the good end of the believers, as opposed to the severe punishment awaiting disbelievers, while they were also warned that the people they were following were the ones who were prompting them to belie the true messenger of Allah, and the same people will refuse to help you in any way on the Day of Judgment, in fact, they would paint you black and you would curse them.

After a delineation of these subjects, the text has, in the concluding part, reverted to the main purpose, that is, it takes up the confirmation of prophethood of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In this process, along with a presentation of necessary arguments, a compassionate invitation to believe has also been given.

In verse 69, it was said: **مَا كَان لِي مِنْ عِلْمٍ بِالْمَلَأِ الْأَعْلَى إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ** (I had no knowledge of the Heavenly Beings when they were debating (about the

creation of 'Ādam). Means: 'It is a clear proof of my prophethood that I am telling you these things from such a high assembly, things that cannot be found out through any medium other than wahy (revelation).' The words 'these things' refer to the conversation between Allah Ta'ālā and the angels at the time of the creation of Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام and which finds mention in Sūrah Al-Baqarah where the angels had said: *أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ* (They said, "Will You create there one who will spread disorder on the earth and cause bloodsheds...? - 2:30). This conversation has been expressed here through the word: *اختصام* (*ikhtiṣām*) which literally means 'quarrel' or 'debate' - although, the angels never posed that question in terms of some objection or debate, instead, they wanted to find out the wise consideration behind the creation of Sayyidnā 'Ādam, عليه السلام but the outward pattern of the questions and answers had taken the form of some sort of a debate, therefore, it was alluded to as 'ikhtisam' or debate. This is similar to a younger person questioning an elder person, who refers to that question and answer, in a frank and casual manner, as a debate or quarrel.

In verse 71, it was said: *إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَكَةِ* (When your Lord said to the angels...):

Mentioned here is the event of the creation of 'Ādam عليه السلام. Not only that it alludes to the conversation between Allah Ta'ālā and the angels mentioned above, but also invites our attention towards the way Iblis had refused to prostrate himself before Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام just because of his envy and arrogance, very similarly, the Mushriks of Arabia were not willing to accept his advice because of their envy and arrogance - hence, they were going to meet the same fate as was met by Iblīs. (Tafsīr Kabir)

In verse 75, it was said: *لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإَدْيٍ* (what I created with My hands...):

Here, it is about Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام that Allah Ta'ālā has said that it is He who had created him with His hands. There is a consensus among the majority of the Muslim Ummah that "hands" do not mean that Allah Ta'ālā has hands as human being do. The reason is that Allah Ta'ālā is absolutely pure and free from the need of body or its active limbs. Therefore, it means the power and control of Allah Ta'ālā and that the word: *يَد* (*yad*: hand) is commonly used in the Arabic language in the sense of power - for example, it was said: *بِيَدِهِ عُقْدَةُ النَّكَاحِ* (in whose hand lies

the marriage tie - 2:237). Therefore, the verse means: 'I created 'Ādam with My power.' For that matter, everything in this universe owes its creation to nothing but Divine power. But, when Allah Ta'ālā intends to manifest the particular sublimity of something, He would specially attribute it to Himself, for instance, by such attribution the Ka'bah becomes Baytullah, the House of Allah; the she-camel of Sayyidnā Ṣāliḥ عليه السلام - 'nāqatullāh', the She-Camel of Allah; and Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام - 'kalīmatullāh,' 'the Word of Allah' or 'rūḥullāh,' 'the Spirit of Allah.' Here too, this attribution has been introduced there to enhance the grace of Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام. (Qurṭubī)<sup>1</sup>

In verse 86, it was said: وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُتَكَلِّفِينَ (nor am I from among those who make up things artificially.).

### The blameworthiness of artificial behavior

The statement means: 'I am not declaring my prophethood artificially, nor am I falsely pretending to have knowledge and wisdom, rather, I am conveying the commandments of Allah to you as they are. From this we learn that feigned formality and pretension is blameworthy in the light of the Shari'ah. Accordingly, there are some *aḥādīth* that condemn it. In the Ṣaḥīḥayn (al-Bukhārī and Muslim), it has been reported from Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd عليه السلام:

"O people, whoever from among you knows something, let him tell people about it. But, that which he does not know, let him simply say: اللَّهُ اعْلَم (Allah knows best) (because) Allah Ta'ālā has said about his Rasūl ﷺ: قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُتَكَلِّفِينَ (Say, "I do not demand from you any fee for it, nor am I from among those who make up things artificially." - 38:86)." (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī)

### alḥamdulillāh The Commentary on Sūrah Ṣād

1. This interpretation is based on the line adopted by some theologians. The others are of the view that the word 'yad' (hand) used for Allah does not refer to a limb like the hand of human beings. It is rather an attribute of Allah Ta'ālā, the exact nature of which is unknown. The third view is of some other elders who abstain from indulging in the interpretation of such expressions and prefer to keep silent about them, and leave their exact meaning to Allah Ta'ālā. Muhammad Taqī Usmani